



South Carolina  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

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Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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## **Statement Regarding SLED's Sept. 19 Arrest**

The South Carolina Department of Agriculture takes seriously the integrity of the Hemp Farming Program. Hemp is legal within the parameters of program, which SCDA administers. We are not a law enforcement agency — we are required to report certain violations of the program to law enforcement.

As part of the permitting process, permitted hemp farmers sign an agreement that says they will report all acreage on which they intend to grow hemp. It's important that we have a record of GPS coordinates of acreage with permitted hemp growing on it — not only is it required by law, but we've shared that information with law enforcement when they have questions.

SCDA is required to report to SLED and the SC Attorney General any violations of the hemp program that we believe are willful, which is what we did in this case. The decision to take action — and what action to take — lies with law enforcement.

This incident hasn't dampened SCDA's enthusiasm about the Hemp Farming Program. We have more than 100 permitted farmers this year, many of them getting ready to harvest their 2019 crops, and we're committed to supporting this growing industry.

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